

third front, the southern border with Mexico.

Last Saturday, two American teenagers were brutally shot and killed in Mexico in the Mexican border town of Juarez, Mexico. That is right across the Rio Grande River from El Paso, Texas. On Thursday, drug cartels gunned down eight people at a bar in Juarez. On Sunday, Homero Salcido, the head of security and intelligence for the state of Nuevo Leon in Mexico, was shot in the head and his car was set ablaze. Nuevo Leon is close to the U.S. border and once was considered one of the safest towns in all of Mexico. These murders are evidence that the narcoterrorists are continuing to expand their control with our neighbors to the south in Mexico.

There are portions of Mexico that are under the control of the drug bandits, and honest law enforcement is nonexistent. However, Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano has said that the situation on the border has been "mischaracterized" by lawmakers for political reasons.

Well, the same can be said of Homeland Security Director Napolitano. She mischaracterizes the border region, claiming it is safe. This is either for political reasons or because she refuses to admit the Federal Government is unwilling or incapable of securing the border.

More than 34,000 people have been murdered in our neighboring country of Mexico since the drug cartels began their reign of terror in 2006. In my opinion, neither the United States nor Mexico has operational control of some border regions. Drugs and people are smuggled into the U.S. and guns and money are smuggled to the south into Mexico.

And this is just not a Mexican problem. For example, 27 percent of the inmates in United States prisons are not U.S. citizens: 17.5 percent are from the nation of Mexico, and a whopping 37 percent of Texas border jails contain foreign nationals. If the border is so secure, Ms. Napolitano, how come so many thousands of illegals are pouring into our country committing serious crimes and filling up our prisons? How can any reasonable person say our borders are secure when 27 percent of America's prisons are the home to foreign nationals? They wouldn't be in prison if they didn't cross the border in the first place.

There is more. Jose Oswaldo Reyes Alfaro, an illegal immigrant from El Salvador, went on a killing rampage in Manassas on Wednesday. He shot and killed three people and injured another. Alfaro had been ordered to be deported in 2002, but he just never left the country. These murders could have been prevented if our border security plan, Ms. Napolitano, was working.

An 8-year-old girl in Fairfax, Virginia, was raped by an illegal in her own home. Her rapist was Salvador Portillo-Saravia, a known criminal who was living in the United States illegally.

□ 1010

In 2003, Portillo-Saravia, an MS-13 gang member, was arrested and deported to El Salvador. But since we have open borders, the child rapist was able to sneak back into the United States unnoticed and under the radar. He was even arrested in November of 2010, but rather than be held in jail for deportation, he was released back on the streets because no one was able to check his illegal status. And 1 month later, Salvador Portillo-Saravia raped an innocent 8-year-old girl in her own home.

This disgusting crime could have been prevented if we secured our borders, deported illegals that were in this country, and kept them from returning. Tell the parents of this 8-year-old girl, Madam Secretary, that our border crisis is just "mischaracterized." Our system is flawed and Homeland Security better understand that it is the duty of the Federal Government to protect the people of this Nation and quit making excuses.

It's way past time to put more National Guard troops on the border. I have introduced legislation to put 10,000 National Guard troops on the southern border to be paid for by the Federal Government but supervised by the four State Governors. We protect the borders of other nations. It's about time we protect our own.

Meanwhile, it appears Homeland Security is living in never-never land or blissfully unaware of the real world on the southern border—or mischaracterizes the situation for political reasons.

And that's just the way it is.

THE BUDGET: OUR PRIORITIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CICILLINE. Madam Speaker, I rise today with great concern about the future of our country. And that's because in the past few days we've seen the valley between the hardworking middle class and the rich continue to grow wider and wider. It's a matter of priorities, Madam Speaker, and right now we can see very clearly where my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have placed their priorities. It's not in the well-being of our workforce, not in the effectiveness of our classrooms, and not in the safety of our neighborhoods. No, Madam Speaker. The priorities of the majority party are not with the people who have worked hard all their lives to earn a decent wage, buy a decent home, put their kids through school, and do what they can to keep their families and communities strong. The priorities of my Republican colleagues lay with America's most successful—the hedge fund managers, Wall Street financiers, and investment bankers. That's why they worked so hard to give those folks another tax

break at the end of last year under the guise of extending unemployment benefits for many people who lost jobs through no fault of their own.

But, my friends, you see, the rich didn't need another tax break—not now; not when their taxes are the lowest they've been since 1950, and a tax cut that added \$800 billion to our deficit over the next decade. In addition to that, as part of the Recovery Act, Congress enacted the largest tax cut in American history and Democrats provided additional tax rebates for businesses that provide their employees with health insurance.

Amidst these tremendous tax breaks for the past 2 years, the Republicans are moving forward with a dangerous spending bill, one that continues to give rewards to the rich and literally guts the initiatives most meaningful to middle class families. Simply put, the Republicans' spending bill is irresponsible and tone deaf to the needs of a healing Nation. It cuts jobs, threatens American innovation, and diminishes investments in rebuilding America. It makes devastating cuts to education—reducing Pell Grants by \$800 per student and kicking more than 200,000 children out of Head Start. It reduces the competitiveness of our workforce by slashing \$1.6 billion in job training and cutting \$120 million in alternative youth training that sends kids to work in construction and other trades—critical skills that will help us make things again in America and put us on better footing to compete with the rest of the world.

It derails \$2.5 million in funding for high-speed trains, canceling 76 projects in 40 States, at the loss of 25,000 jobs focused on rebuilding America; and, at the same time, reduces our domestic security by eliminating 1,330 police officers and 2,400 firefighters, making our communities less safe.

The work of reducing our deficit and controlling spending will be hard, to be sure. The fact of the matter is that we have to cut spending. But we have to do it responsibly. We cannot cut what makes us competitive and what helps us to innovate, to succeed in the global economy, and ultimately to create jobs. The President's budget makes some serious cuts to good programs—some I strongly object to. But as we work to cut spending, we have to be sure that it's not at the expense of continuing to support initiatives that create jobs, educate our children, and keep our communities safe. We have to be serious and smart about how we address America's budget challenges.

This week, we will begin debate here in this Chamber on this budget challenge. I've heard from many of my constituents about the concerns that they have related to the Federal budget for this year. It's those conversations and the families I've met all across Rhode Island during the course of my campaign that I've got on my mind. I know what their priorities are. I've seen the circumstances and I understand the

challenges that their families are facing.

My friends, we owe it to the hardworking people of our country who are struggling to get by and who are playing by the rules but just waiting for someone to stand up for them rather than the rich guy on Wall Street. We owe it to America's hardworking people to have a serious and thoughtful debate in the hopes of producing a smart and essential budget for our country.

Our colleagues on the other side of the aisle have become captive to an extremist agenda that harms people who are already hurting the most. That's why it's critical we ask our Republican friends, Just what are your priorities? Do we have the courage to come together—not as Democrats or Republicans, but as Americans—and invest in our country's greatest asset—our people; the people who built this great Nation and who we must believe in, now more than ever, to move our country forward to a prosperous and promising future.

A NEVADA HERO: FRANCISCO "FRANK" CEDULA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HECK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HECK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a heroic Nevadan who passed away February 2, 2011. His name was Francisco "Frank" Cedula. He was born in the Philippines in Pasay City on January 7, 1923. Frank studied journalism at the University of Santo Tomas until he joined the Philippine resistance in 1941. At just 17 years old, he fought to disrupt the Japanese military's occupation. Eventually, Frank was captured and tortured by the Japanese, but he managed to escape and rejoin the guerilla fighters.

On December 26, 1941, Frank fought in the Battle of Piis. More than 100 American and Filipino soldiers fought and died in the battle. Their sacrifice gave General MacArthur's troops, his small USAFFE forces, enough time to assemble in Bataan. Commander Cedula was the lone survivor of the 3-day battle. He was bayoneted four times and left for dead. The natives assigned to bury the dead found him alive and nursed him back to health. Once healthy, he again rejoined the guerilla forces and continued the fight. Later in the war, Frank helped liberate American prisoners of war.

When the war ended, Frank served as the Filipino Veterans Legion National Commander for almost three decades. During his term as National Commander, the Filipino Veterans Legion created significant new benefits for their members. In 2005, Commander Cedula authored "Filipino Veterans of WWII—An Endangered Human Specie" to help inform congressional Members and veteran supporters about World War II Filipino veterans who were promised, and later denied, recognition and benefits for 60 years.

Frank was a man who set goals, then accomplished them. Frank achieved one goal when the World War II Filipino Veterans Equity Bill became law. After the law passed, Frank coauthored a new book, "Denial and Restitution by America." This sequel to his first book thanked the congressional and Senate leaders who fought to turn the World War II Filipino Veterans Equity Bill into law.

For 20 years, he planned to construct a memorial marker at kilometer 134 in Quezon, Philippines, to honor and memorialize the men who lost their lives in the battle. Commander Cedula returned from a trip to the Philippines where he finalized the funding for that dream.

I am honored to call Commander Cedula a friend and a Nevadan.

CONGRATULATING WORLD CHAMPION GREEN BAY PACKERS ON WINNING SUPER BOWL XLV

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND) for 5 minutes.

Mr. KIND. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and thank my good friend and colleague from the Pittsburgh area, JASON ALTMIRE, for delivering on his Super Bowl bet with me last evening.

As we now know, a little over a week ago, my Green Bay Packers defeated his Pittsburgh Steelers 31-25 to win Super Bowl XLV. It was the Packers' 13th world title and their fourth Super Bowl victory, enabling them to bring home once again, where it belongs, the Vince Lombardi Trophy to Titletown, USA—Green Bay, Wisconsin.

□ 1020

To the victor belongs the spoils. So, last night, JASON and his staff delivered to my office some of Pittsburgh's finest cuisine—Primanti sandwiches and Iron City brew. Now, it didn't quite rival the world-famous tailgate parties that we have at Lambeau Field, but it wasn't bad.

We may have fun with our sports teams around here from time to time; but it is also useful to remind ourselves that at the end of the day, when the game is played and the score is settled, it is only just a game.

No one expressed that more eloquently than the MVP of Super Bowl XLV, the Green Bay Packers' quarterback, Aaron Rodgers. It was recently reported that, earlier in the season, Aaron Rodgers had sent a big care package out to his former girlfriend's elementary school in California, where she is teaching. In it was a host of school supplies, along with a bunch of Packer T-shirts and sweatshirts and other Packer paraphernalia. Also included in the care package was a note that Aaron Rodgers wrote to his former girlfriend, the teacher of that class, which read: Just to be clear, what you're doing in your life right now is a heck of a lot more important than what I'm doing in my life.

It's really refreshing to see a professional athlete at the peak of his career, at the height of his game, stay so well-grounded and understand what really is important to the future of our country, which is the future of our children and their educational success in the classroom. Whether he called for it or not, Aaron Rodgers has turned into a terrific role model for all of our children across this country. It is a constant reminder of the challenges that we still face and of the values that we still must hold dear in this country.

So I, too, want to congratulate Aaron Rodgers and the Green Bay Packers football team for their success; I want to congratulate the Packers organization and the tens of thousands of Packers fans who are part owners of the Packers franchise, including my own family.

In the immortal words of my 12-year-old son, Matthew, who turned to me shortly after their Super Bowl victory last week: Hey, Dad. You know, that was a lot of fun. Let's do it again.

So, indeed, let's do this again next season. I wish the Packers well, and I thank JASON ALTMIRE and his staff for delivering the goodies to our office last night.

BLOWING SMOKE AMIDST DIRE FINANCIAL STRAITS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Madam Speaker, our Nation is in dire financial straits, and, unfortunately, many on both sides of the aisle are blowing smoke about how serious they are in dealing with this problem.

The fact is we are looking at a record \$1.6 trillion deficit. Now, it wouldn't have been a record and it wouldn't have been \$1.6 trillion but for one vote: the Obama-McConnell tax compromise, the Republicans insisting that all of the Bush tax cuts passed in a time of surplus should be continued in a time of record deficits. That means, with borrowed money, there will be tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires and other special interests, or we will forgo the revenue of having them pay their fair share of taxes, say the rate they paid in the Clinton era when the economy did very well and they did very well.

So with that one single vote, suddenly we jumped up to a \$1.6 trillion deficit. Now, the Republican majority says, oh, no, no, no, that cutting taxes doesn't count. Their rules deem that cutting taxes doesn't count. We can cut taxes without reducing spending; we can borrow the money and increase the deficit and the debt, but they say it doesn't count. They have deemed that in their rules. So they're really blowing smoke here. You cannot pretend that you're serious about the deficit if you say we can continue to reduce income. Here is what this year's Federal budget looks like.